



United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service

Western Region

Reply to

Attn of:

CACFP Policy Memo 03-12

June 26, 2003

SA-09-02

SFSP Policy Memo 03-04

SA-09-03

School Programs Policy Memo 03-05

SA-09-01

Subject:

Effects of Bussing on Area Eligibility in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Program, and the National School Lunch Program.

To:

State Child Nutrition Directors

For the purpose of this memorandum, we will refer to “bussing” as the practice in public school systems that reassign children (by way of bussing) to schools outside the attendance area of their neighborhood school.

We are aware bussing can be a potential barrier to program participation. This can cause a Program sponsor to designate a site, located in an area in which poor economic conditions exist, as ineligible based on enrollment data that the school has adjusted to reflect student reassignments.

This situation may occur in any program in which a Program sponsor bases a site’s eligibility on the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals in the National School Lunch Program. The effect of bussing is especially significant to sites applying to participate in the Summer Food Service Program, in At-risk Afterschool Programs participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and in the snack service in afterschool care programs under the National School Lunch Program. In these programs, meal service sites are generally associated with the neighborhood school of the children, rather than where the children attend school.

To address this issue, we determined that in situations where public schools routinely bus children from their neighborhood school to other schools, site eligibility may be based on one of two methods. The Program sponsor may determine site eligibility by selecting one of the following methods and basing eligibility on the enrollment/attendance data obtained for:

- the school the children attend and are bussed to (this represents currently established policy), or
- the school the children would have attended were it not for the school’s bussing policy (the neighborhood school where the children live). Program sponsors may determine a site to be area eligible in this situation ONLY if the school food authority is able to document the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals at each school, before and after students are reassigned.

The Program sponsor must use the same method of determining site eligibility for all sites participating under its sponsorship to avoid duplicate counting.

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact your team.

*Janet Allen*

JANET ALLEN, Director  
Special Nutrition Programs  
Western Region

cc: WRO Advocates